



**THE CITY OF NEW YORK
BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 6**

1932 Arthur Avenue, Room 403-A, Bronx, New York 10457

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Honorable Vanessa L. Gibson, Bronx Borough President

Honorable Oswald Feliz, New York City Council Member

MS. EVONNE CAPERS
Board Chairperson

MR. RAFAEL MOURE-PUNNETT
District Manager

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD #6

Meeting minutes of Wednesday, September 13, 2023

Members Present:

Clarita Bailon, Isaac Bowen, Cornell Brown, Bridget Brantley, Evonne Capers, Michael Caraballo, Margarita Espinosa, Frank Franz, Melissa Guzman, Gail Irby, Laura James, Magdamary Marcano, Angel Nunez-Garcia, Jessi Parham, Lamont Parker, Rosa Peraza, Reggie Powell, Samsondeen Rahem, Renee Reed, Kristine Rivera, Yamelith Rivera, Carol Robinson, Lisa Sanchez, Gil Simmons, Gladys Sotomayor, Monique Williams, and Annette Wright.

Members Absent:

John Barzack, Nicole Carter, Sadija Cekovic, Sadonia Croom, Maria Garcia, Maria Latimer, Matthew Martinez (Leave of Absence), Francene Miller, Paul Ramirez, Carmen Rivera, Noorjahan Wells, and Angelina Zervos (Leave of Absence).

Elected Officials Representatives Present:

Alexis Ruiz, representing Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson
Santiago Baena, representing New York City Council Member Oswald Feliz
Christian Cardus, representing New York State Senator Luis Sepulveda
Raishiel Munez, representing United States Congressman Ritchie Torres
Semania Suspo, Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The September 13, 2023 meeting of Bronx Community Board #6 was held at the SBH Health System's Health and Wellness Center located at 4507 Third Avenue, and was called to order at approximately 6:40 PM by Chairperson Evonne Capers.

II. INVOCATION

The meeting's invocation was delivered by Board Member Kristine Rivera.

III. COMMUNITY PERIOD

Individuals who asked to address the community board as part of the meeting's Community Period included:

Aurea Mangual, representing Social Service Employees Union Local 371

Ms. Mangual informed us about the City Council Bill Int 1099–2023. This bill would require the City to offer Medicare-eligible city retirees and their Medicare-eligible dependents at least one Medigap plan with benefits equivalent to or better than those available to city retirees and their dependents as of December 31, 2021. The bill would not impair employee organizations from negotiating terms and conditions of employment for their employee members. Ms. Mangual encouraged us to reach out to our local City Council members to support this bill.

Margarita Lopez

Ms. Lopez informed us that she is a public employee retiree who will be affected by the proposed upcoming Medicare Advantage plans. She also encouraged us to reach out to our local City Council members to support the Int 1099-2023 bill.

Victor Pichardo, representing SBH Health System

Mr. Pichardo welcomed us to the SBH Health System's Health and Wellness Center. He informed us that there are cooking classes and gym access at a low cost available. Mr. Pichardo also informed us that SBH Health System held various backpack giveaways this past summer with our local elected officials.

Cardine, representing Good Shepherd Services

Cardine informed us that Good Shepherd Services offers youth programming and operates BRAGG's credible messenger program out of SBH Health System. She also informed us that their afterschool program is located at M.S. 45 with a free gym, a teen program, and an adult program from 6 PM to 9 PM. They also offer their programming on Saturday from 10 AM to 4 PM.

Maria Acevedo, representing Hot Bread Kitchen

Ms. Acevedo informed us that Hot Bread Kitchen is a nonprofit organization that creates economic opportunities through career development. They have various programs that serve various groups of individuals including immigrants and nonbinary. They also have a that was created in partnership with SBS Health System and Uber, which provides 14 weeks of culinary training and placement. There is an upcoming 5-week training program that will be starting in the Bronx.

Gail Nathan and Liliana Candalairo, representing Bronx River Art Center

Ms. Nathan and Ms. Candalario announced the Bronx River Art Center's upcoming exhibition, Pick Me Up, Put Me On. This exhibition is a visual conversation between Estelle Maisonett and Oscar

Morel, two Bronx-born artists who exemplify the enduring resonance of collage through themes of community, identity, and place. They also announced that their fall semester of art classes will begin on October 2, 2023 and registration is available.

Walter Bell, representing Keep It Simple and Safe

Mr. Bell informed us about the overdose prevention work at Keep It Simple and Safe as a result of the high rates of overdose in the areas of the Bronx they serve and about their training programs. He also thanked SBH Health System for allowing them to drop off syringes for disposal, and Bronx Community Boards 6 and 7 for their collaboration. Mr. Bell also dropped off NARCAN kits.

IV. BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Bronx Borough Vanessa L. Gibson's report was presented by her Director of Community Boards, Ms. Ciara Gannon. The report included, but was not limited to, the following information:

- Ms. Gannon informed us that Community Board membership appointments and reappointments will be finalized by the beginning of July.
- Ms. Gannon also invited us to Borough President Gibson's Juneteenth event on Friday, June 16, 2023 at 12:00 PM at Bronx Borough Hall at 851 Grand Concourse.
- Ms. Gannon also invited us to Borough President Gibson's Caribbean Heritage Celebration on Thursday, June 22, 2023 from 5:30 PM to 8:00 PM at the Code Red on 1320 East Gun Hill Road.

V. ELECTED OFFICIALS' REPORTS

Leonardo Coello representing New York City Mayor Eric Adams

Mr. Coello informed us that Mayor Adams is ensuring that the school year is off to a great start by ensuring that safety measures are implemented throughout the school in New York City. He also informed us that Mayor Adams announced the City's budget cut for the fiscal year. He informed us that agencies must cut their operating budget by 15% by the end of the fiscal year. Mr. Coello informed us that Mayor Adams is also encouraging individuals to contact their state elected representatives and request funding to help with the migrant crisis, as well as advocacy to help individuals become gainfully employed. Sycamore Grove from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM.

Semania Suspo, Bronx District Attorney Darcel Clark

Ms. Suspo announced that Bronx District Attorney Clark will be hosting a resource fair at the Eastchester Road Community Garden on Tuesday, September 26, 2023 from 12:30 PM to 2:30 PM. She also announced that Bronx District Attorney Clark will be hosting her annual 5K Walk, Run, Roll to End Domestic Violence on Saturday, October 7, 2023 at 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM and encouraged participants to wear purple.

Santiago Baena, New York City Council Member Oswald Feliz

Mr. Baena informed us that the New York City Department of Sanitation will be installing eleven security cameras to address the illegal dumping throughout the district. He also informed us that the City Council's proposal to create a free, trade-in program for lithium-ion batteries will be going into effect within the upcoming days. Mr. Baena also informed us that their district office is located at 573 East Fordham Road and constituent services are available Monday through Thursday from 10 AM to 4 PM.

Raishiel Munez, United States Congressman Ritchie Torres

Ms. Nunez informed us that the \$10 million in funding for the business in the Bronx will be provided through the federal Small Business Administration's (SBA) Community Advantage Loan Program was announced on August 17, 2023. He also informed us that Congressman Torres introduced the "Right to Medicare Act" that would prohibit employers, both public and private, from involuntarily forcing seniors to shift away from traditional Medicare coverage in favor of Medicare Advantage and would amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to require employers to offer an opt-in option for seniors who might want change from traditional Medicare to Medicare Advantage.

Christian Cardus, New York Senator Luis Sepulveda

Mr. Cardus informed us that Senator Sepulveda's main goal is to bring as much funding as possible for the district during the Senate legislative session. He also informed us that along with Assembly Member Catalina Cruz, Senator Sepulveda supports passing a bill to expedite temporary worker's permits. Senator Sepulveda is also working on a bill to enforce certified documentation from sellers of bikes with lithium ion batteries. Mr. Cardus also informed us that their district office is open Monday through Thursday from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM.

VI. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Ms. Evonne Capers chairperson's report included the following information:

- Ms. Capers informed us that the Executive Committee met to discuss and review the Bronx Community Board #6's Fiscal Year 2023 Operating Budget.
- Ms. Capers also informed us that the Executive Committee resolved to offer the Community Associate position to Ms. Sonia Banegas.
- Ms. Capers also informed us that the Executive Committee conducted a performance review for District Manager Rafael Moure-Punnett and determined a salary increase based on the results.
- Ms. Capers also reminded us about the proposed by-law that was presented at the June Community Board Meeting which will be voted on at this meeting.

VII. DISTRICT MANAGER

Mr. Moure-Punnett's district manager's report included the following information:

- Mr. Moure-Punnett informed us that as a result of the joint meeting with Bronx Community Board #5 regarding the City's shelter sitting policy, Bronx Community Boards #1-6 and 12 issued a letter to Council Member Diana Ayala to assist with this issue.
- Mr. Moure-Punnett also informed us that Bronx Community Board #6 has a new website. You can now visit nyc.gov/bxcb6 to view our press coverage, bylaws, minutes, agendas, and our calendar.
- Mr. Moure-Punnett also announced that the Sanitation and Transportation Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, September 28, 2023 this month.

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Rosa Peraza, By-Laws Ad-Hoc Committee Chairperson

Ms. Peraza reported that the By-Laws Ad-Hoc Committee reviewed the next section of Bronx Community Board #6's By-Laws. She also asked that future proposed amendments to the By-Laws be shared with the By-Laws Ad-Hoc Committee in advance for recommendation.

Mr. Lamont Parker, Disciplinary Committee Chairperson

Mr. Parker reported to us that the Disciplinary Committee discussed the need to update their by-laws regarding the publication of names. He also reported that the committee also discussed excused absences and resolved to consider excused absences when reviewing attendance and included such language in the committee's by-laws.

Ms. Margarita Espinosa, Environment and Parks Committee Chairperson

Ms. Espinosa reported that the Environment and Parks was informed that the New York Restoration Project will be conducting capital improvements to Perry's Garden located at 2139 Daly Avenue. The Environment and Parks Committee discussed the conditions of the parks and playgrounds in the district with the Department of Parks and Recreation as a result of the increase in complaints.

Ms. Kristine Rivera, Health and Human Services Committee Chairperson

Ms. Rivera reported that the Health and Human Services Committee was informed that Ahoo Nation's workout programming is occurring in Mapes Ballfield. The Health and Human Services Committee also reviewed the Department of Youth and Community Development's list of publicly funded programs in the district, the majority of which are after school programs. They also discussed My.BronxImpact.org, which is a resource directory for the Community Board.

Mr. Frank Franz, Housing and Land-Use Committee Chairperson

Mr. Franz reported that the Housing and Land-Use Committee was informed that Fulcrum Properties is proposing to develop three vacant sites located at 1900 Marmion Avenue, 706 Fairmount Avenue, and 907 East 175th Street in this district into housing.

Ms. Lisa Sanchez, Transportation Committee Chairperson

Ms. Sanchez reported that the Transportation Committee was informed of the Citi Bike Expansion Phase 3 and the Fordham Road Better Bus Plan by the New York City Department of Transportation. The Transportation Committee also discussed the Southern Boulevard between East 182nd Street and Fordham Road Safety Improvement Project that was implemented by the New York City Department of Transportation in 2021 after the Board expressed their concerns with the proposals of the project and issued a letter of objection. Ms. Sanchez also informed us that the New York City Department of Transportation has not provided the Community Board with an update in regard to the Café Building and Kiosk 2 at Fordham Plaza even after letters have been sent to Commissioner Ydanis Rodriguez and news articles have come covering this issue. She also reported that the Transportation Committee was informed that the New York City Department of Design and Construction issued a letter to the Community Board apologizing for the delay in the reconstruction of the Devoe Avenue, Boston Road and East 177th Street Project.

Michael Caraballo, representing Youth and Education Committee

Mr. Caraballo reported that the Youth and Education Committee was informed about the P.S. 32 Open Streets programming by Street Lab. Street Lab has been working with the New York City Department of Education to identify schools in need of outdoor and physical programming and began a partnership with P.S. 32 located in our district earlier this school year.

IX. ROLL CALL ATTENDANCE

A roll call attendance was taken confirming a quorum with the presence of twenty-one (21) members.

X. ADOPTION OF MOTIONS

1. A motion to adopt the minutes of Bronx Community Board #6's meeting of June 14, 2023 was made by Ms. Margarita Espinosa, seconded by Mr. Frank Franz, and adopted by a vote of twenty-seven in favor, zero abstentions, and zero oppositions.
2. A motion to amend Article I and II of Bronx Community Board #6's By-Laws

Article I of Bronx Community Board #6's By-Laws would read as follows:

ARTICLE I

EFFECT

Sec.1 — The By-Laws, upon adoption, shall be the By-Laws of Community Board #6 (hereinafter referred to as “the Board”) of the Borough of the Bronx, and shall be the governing instrument of the Board, subject to the provisions of the New York City Charter (hereinafter referred to as “the Charter”) Chapters 27, 68, 69, and 70 and the Rules of the City of New York Title 62 governing the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (hereinafter referred to as “ULURP”).

POWERS

Sec. 2 – The Board shall exercise those powers and perform those functions set forth in the charter and the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure regarding any matter concerning its community district. The boundaries of its district shall be, as defined by the map adopted by the board of Estimate pursuant to Chapter 69, Section 2702.d of the New York City Charter.

was made by Ms. Rosa Peraza, seconded by Mr. Lamont Parker, and adopted by a vote of twenty-seven in favor, zero abstentions, and zero oppositions.

- 3. A motion to approve District Manager Rafael Moure-Punnett’s 10% salary increase from \$97,500 to \$107,250 was made by Mr. Lamont Parker, seconded by Ms. Lisa Sanchez and adopted by a vote of twenty-seven in favor, zero abstentions, and zero oppositions.**

3A. A motion to amend the salary increase to 8%, with a new salary of \$105,300, per the Executive Committee’s recommendation was made by Ms. Kristine Rivera, seconded by Ms. Monique Williams, and adopted by a vote of twenty-seven in favor, zero abstentions, and zero oppositions.

- 4. A motion to hire Ms. Sonia Banegas as Bronx Community Board #6’s Community Associate at \$23.54 an hour, for 24 hours a week, with a 90-day probationary period was made by Ms. Lamont Parker, seconded by Mr. Gil Simmons, and adopted by a vote of twenty-seven in favor, zero abstentions, and zero oppositions.**
- 5. A motion to issue a letter of recommendation to Mr. Samsondeen Raheem for his application for a PHD was made by Mr. Gil Simmons, seconded by Mr. Frank Franz, and adopted by a vote of twenty-six in favor, one abstention, and zero oppositions.**

XI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business to discuss, the September 13, 2023 meeting of Bronx Community Board #6 was adjourned at approximately 8:34 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

**Carla Leon
Community Coordinator**

